

7. (Amended) A content's distribution system that distributes digitized contents to plural users, comprising:

a distribution device that distributes encrypted contents;

a user terminal that receives encrypted contents distributed by said distribution device, selects at least one encrypted content from the distributed encrypted contents, and generates accounting information according to the utilization of said selected encrypted content; and

a central station that collects and totalizes accounting information generated by said user terminal.

REMARKS

Claims 1-15 are pending in this Application. By this Amendment, claims 1, 5 and 7 are amended. Reconsideration of the Application in view of the above amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

The attached Appendix includes marked-up copies of each rewritten claim (37 C.F.R. §1.121(c)(1)(ii)).

The Office Action objects to the drawings filed on September 2, 1999. Applicants have submitted formal drawings to obviate this objection. Accordingly, withdrawal of the objection to the drawings is respectfully requested.

The Office Action rejects claims 1, 5-7 and 11 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Dillon (U.S. Patent No. 5,727,065); rejects claims 2-4, 8-10 and 15 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Dillon in view of Downs (U.S. Patent No. 6,226,618 B1); and further rejects claims 12-14 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Dillon in view of Stefik (U.S. Patent No. 5,634,012). Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections.

In particular, Applicants assert that neither Dillon, Downs nor Stefik, individually or in combination, disclose or suggest a contents distribution method for distributing digitized contents to plural users, including at least the step of encrypting and distributing contents to a

plurality of users, selecting by a user at least one of an encrypted content from a distributed contents; decoding the encrypted content and utilizing thereof by the user; and executing accounting to the user according to the utilized content, as recited in independent claim 1, and similarly recited in independent claim 7.

Dillon discloses an electronic document delivery system in which a user can determine which documents he wishes to receive, and in which the users charge only for those documents that he receives. See, for example, Background of the Invention. In particular, Dillon discloses that periodically a catalog of documents to be sent during an upcoming time period is sent by a broadcast center to a plurality of receiving computers. Users of the receiving computers, either human being or other computers, designate which documents in the catalog they wish to receive. Sometime later, the broadcast center broadcasts in an encrypted form each of the documents listed in the catalog. As each document is received by a receiving computer, the receiving computer determines whether one or more of its users have designated documents as the document from the catalog that they would like to receive. If the document was designated by the user, the receiving computer decrypts the document and stores billing information about the received documents. The billing information will be transferred back to the broadcast center at a later time. See, for example, column 4, lines 1-20.

Stated differently, in Dillon, a user selects from the catalog which documents the user's wishes to decode and later in time when the broadcast center broadcasts the documents in encrypted form, the receiving computer recalls which documents the user has designated that they would like to receive, and the receiving computer decrypts the documents and stores the billing information on the received document.

On the contrary, and in contrast with the claimed invention, independent claim 1 recites a contents distribution method for distributing digitized contents to plural users, including encrypting and distributing contents to the plural users; selecting by a user at least

one of the encrypted content from the distributed contents; decoding the encrypted content and utilizing thereof by the user; and executing accounting to the user according to the utilized content, as recited in independent claim 1, and similarly recited in independent claim 7.

Downs does not cure the above-noted deficiencies of Dillon. The Office Action, on page 4, discloses that Downs is cited as disclosing an electronic content delivery system for providing digital content and secure containers to a plurality of users, and further teach that summary information is included in the encrypted contents container. However, Downs fails to disclose or suggest selecting by a user at least one of the encrypted content from the distributed contents, decoding the encrypted content and utilizing thereof by the user, and executing accounting to the user according to the utilized content, as recited in independent claim 1, and similarly recited in independent claim 7.

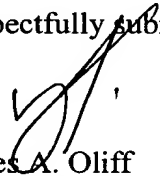
Stefik also fails to cure the above-noted deficiencies of Dillon and Downs. The Office Action, on page 9, state that Stefik is cited as disclosing a system for controlling the distribution and user digital information and teach wherein a printer is used to print a certain number of copies of the decoded information, and performs closing transaction steps including initiating a charge transaction based on the quantity of the utilized contents. However, Stefik fails to disclose or suggest selecting by a user at least one of the encrypted content from the distributed contents, decoding the encrypted content and utilizing thereof by the user; and executing accounting to the user according to said utilized content, as recited in independent claim 1, and similarly recited in independent claim 7.

Accordingly, Applicants submit that independent claims 1 and 7 define patentable subject matter. Claims 2-6 depend from independent claim 1, and therefore also define patentable subject matter. Claims 8-15 depend from independent claim 7, and also define patentable subject matter. Accordingly, Applicants request that rejections under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) and 35 U.S.C. §103(a) be withdrawn.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants submit that this Application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1 - 15 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this Application in better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' undersigned attorney at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,



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Date: March 6, 2002

Attachment:
Appendix
Letter to the Official Draftsman
Formal Drawings

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<p>DEPOSIT ACCOUNT USE AUTHORIZATION Please grant any extension necessary for entry; Charge any fee due to our Deposit Account No. 15-0461</p>
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APPENDIX

Changes to Claims:

The following are marked-up versions of the amended claims:

1. (Amended) A contents distribution method for distributing digitized contents to plural users, comprising the steps of:
 - encrypting and distributing contents to the plural users;
 - selecting by a user at least one of the encrypted content from the distributed contents;
 - decoding the encrypted ~~content~~ contents and utilizing thereof by ~~the~~a user; and
 - executing accounting to the user according to said utilized ~~content~~ contents.
5. (Amended) The contents distribution method according to Claim 1, wherein:
 - said ~~content~~ contents mean a document displayed or printed in a page unit; and
 - said accounting is executed for said page unit.
7. (Amended) A contents distribution system that distributes digitized contents to plural users, comprising:
 - a distribution device that distributes encrypted contents;
 - a user terminal that receives encrypted contents distributed by said distribution device, selects at least one encrypted content from the distributed encrypted contents, and generates accounting information according to the utilization of said ~~selected~~received encrypted ~~content~~ contents; and
 - a central station that collects and totalizes accounting information generated by said user terminal.